AUTO RACING

Press makes perfect moves at Saugus

By BOB SHAFER
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Dan Press skipped the NASCAR Southwest Tour race in San Bernardino Saturday night. That was just one of three great moves he made.

The other two came at Saugus Speedway where the crafty veteran, a former track champion, won the 40-lap modified feature before 3,755 wind-blown spectators.

Press didn't have an easy time of it in the early going. He fell back as far as seventh place as Jim Vermillion cut out a fancy pace.

But as the leaders got bogged down in lapped traffic 10 laps into the event, Press suddenly darted between cars in the third turn, moving all the way to third. That was great move No. 2.

The coup de grace was supplied four laps later as he drew abreast of Vermillion on the backstretch, held his line as fenders meshed and sparks flew, and took the lead coming out of the fourth turn.

From there on, the veteran from Frazier Park had only to contend with teammate Rod Johnson, who took over second place in the melee.

At the end, Press had a six-length margin on his chief rival in the Don Johnson-prepared cars.

Vermillion held on to finish third, followed by hard-knocking Charlie Saied of North Hollywood, Highland's Glen Cummings, Terry Stevens of Valley Center and Canyon Country's Harry Brady.

Another contender in the early going — three-time track champion Ken Sapper of La Crescenta — was eliminated while running third. His engine blew on the 19th lap of a race punctuated by four yellow flags for various spins and crashes.

Allen Boles of San Fernando took the 25-lap hobby stock oval feature from six-time winner Larry Krieger of Reseda. Boles assumed the lead 14 laps into the race.

Rip Michaels, Joe Barrera Jr. and Paul Ausdale followed Boles and Krieger across the finish line.

Brian Kelley of Arleta captured a 15-lap figure eight feature.

Modified preliminaries found Rod Johnson of Canyon Country winning the trophy dash at four laps and eight-lap heat races going to Gary Whitney of Simi Valley, Chis Campanella of Sepulveda and Saied.

Hobby stock dashes went to Barrera, of Canyon Country, on the oval and Kelley on the figure eight course.

Oval heats were taken by Scott Wade of Glendale, Ausdale, of Newhall, and Terry Custer of North Hollywood while Jay Slaughter of West Hills and Kelley took figure eight versions.

Rick Crow of Canyon Country won easily in a 12-lap semi-main for the hobbyists.

Two accidents enlivened this division's racing.

Sepulveda's Jim Kusch, leading from the outset in the second figure eight heat, flipped as he tried to negotiate the next-to-last turn.

In the semi, woman driver Cindy Necessary of Canyon Country, spun and was struck head-on by a car driven by Arcadia's Neil Conrad.

None of the drivers involved was injured.

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